

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 OTTAWA 001190

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/18/2015

TAGS: [CA](#) [MARR](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [AID](#) [KCRS](#)

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL POLICY STATEMENT CALLS FOR ENHANCED  
NORTH AMERICAN ENGAGEMENT

Classified By: POLMINCOUNS Brian Flora, reasons 1.4 (b) (d)

1. (C) Summary: Ottawa unveiled its long-awaited International Policy Statement today, which the government pledged would give Canada a more prominent place on the world stage and provide needed focus to its first-ever effort to integrate defense, diplomacy, development aid, and trade. The document gives special prominence to U.S.-Canadian relations while emphasizing Canada's independence in global affairs. Canada will strive to focus its aid programs on a smaller number of countries and fewer sectors, will roll-out a Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force (START) and increase the size of its military to enhance its ability to respond to global crises, and will give increased emphasis to emerging economies such as India and China, while renewing its emphasis on multilateralism. The Opposition was quick to disparage the rollout as politically motivated, and lamented the lack of bold thinking and strategic decision making, with targeted critiques of each of the segments. We see this document as a very good framework that provides the U.S. with a host of opportunities for enhanced engagement. End Summary

Long Time Coming

2. (SBU) The Liberal Cabinet rolled out the long-awaited International Policy Statement April 19 in a press conference held by the Ministers of Defense, Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation, and International Trade. The 190 page document is available on line at [www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/cip-pic/ips/ips-home-en .asp](http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/cip-pic/ips/ips-home-en.asp)) and includes separate sections for defense, commerce, foreign aid, and diplomacy. Poloff was given a preview of the IPS by Foreign Affairs Canada's Policy Planner Christ Cooter a day prior (Cooter emphasized that we were the only country receiving such a pre-screening). Cooter pointed out the highlights of the document and its evolution.

3. (SBU) Cooter said that the recent review of the IPS by Canadian scholar Jennifer Walsh, who was charged by PM Martin to find a controlling idea to center the statement, failed to draw out the big idea but did help with wordsmithing and changed the structure slightly on the margins. He admitted the timing was not optimal but thought that the controlling ideas were largely bi-partisan and would survive a change in government.

Emphasis on North America

4. (C) Cooter pointed to several of the highlights of the IPS:

-- First, an emphasis on North America and specifically on U.S.-Canadian relations. He said that in each of the four sections, and indeed in many of the subsections, there is a specific place for bilateral issues and considerations. In the Prime Minister's foreword, the first section is Canada in North America, which states unequivocally that all Canadians understand that our most important relationship is with the United States.

Having said that, Cooter conceded that there is not too much that is truly original in this area. Several ideas have been considered by Policy Planning over the past months, such as a sort of North American Davos as a way to increase dialogue and unity. In the end they settled for a loosely conceived North American Network to broaden the range of dialogue between Americans, Canadians, and Mexicans.

-- Second, trade disputes are reducing the strength of North America as an informal bloc, and in a world of rising powers this can only reduce our mutual global influence and prosperity. Improving our methods of resolving trade disputes is given special attention in several places.

-- Third, the IPS calls for new structure for development assistance that will focus Canada's aid programs better geographically and sectorally. By 2010 two-thirds of Canada's aid money will go to 25 countries and will be focused on good governance, health, education, private sector development, environmental sustainability, and gender equality. The majority of these countries are in Africa. While Canada will not try to meet the conventionally accepted target of .7 percent of GDP in foreign assistance, it will increase its assistance by eight percent per year leading to

a doubling of foreign aid between 2001 and 2010.

-- Fourth, Cooter said, the military will receive a plus up of 5,000 soldiers, primarily targeted to assist with failed and failing states (septel will cover the defense portion of the IPS).

-- Fifth, the foreign affairs agencies will be transformed in order to better deliver on the objectives of the new strategy. Defense Minister Bill Graham at the press conference on April 19 referred to this as &eliminating silos8 so that the different agencies work seamlessly rather than in isolation from one another.

-- Sixth, the IPS highlights the Prime Minister,s focus at the last UNGA of the &responsibility to protect.8 Several of the functional areas include objectives and programs to strengthen the ability of the global community to assist the victims of man-induced catastrophes. Cooter said this is one of Canada,s key international defense priorities.

-- Seventh, as one of the concrete measures Canada will take to help failed and failing states, the Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force was created &to ensure that there is longer-term planning for early response to international crises and that the required skills and expertise are at the ready. Existing agencies will be used to source experts and individuals or groups whose capacities are required. They will be dispatched by those responsible, including the military or CIDA.8

Opposition: This is not Mr. Roger,s Neighborhood  
-----

15. (SBU) The Opposition did not waste any time criticizing the policy statement. In Question Period MP James Moore blasted the IPS as an effort at distraction by a government that &has done nothing in the foreign affairs arena for 12 years and now wants to walk away from a scandal.8 The opposition's Shadow Cabinet held a parallel press conference an hour after the government's in which they attacked the strategy.

-- Foreign Affairs critic Stockwell Day lamented the lack of an increase in real defense capabilities, saying &we are not dealing with a Sesame Street neighborhood where the biggest threat is Oscar the Grouch,8 but a world with real dangers that requires a serious military.

-- Trade critic Belinda Stronach keyed on the inability of the Liberal government to improve trade relations with the US, and called for a strengthened effort fix the broken dispute settlement mechanism. &There should have been a political commitment to pursue a new set of concrete negotiations on dispute settlement and a political action plan for engaging the United States systematically at the Cabinet level.8

-- International Cooperation critic Ted Menzies pointed out that Haiti, Sudan, Afghanistan, and Iraq are not on the list of the 25 key countries and these priority countries would instead be getting the crumbs from the remaining one-third of Canada,s foreign aid. He said its established criteria for receiving aid &abandons the poorest of the poor for the easy wins.8

-- Defense critic Gordon Campbell said that the Conservatives were pleased to see that the document had a number of the key planks of the Conservative's defense policy paper issued a year prior. He said that in addition to the obviously required transformation of the armed forces, there is an even more urgent need to transform the Ministry of Defense.

16. (C) Comment: Politically motivated or not, it is frankly good to finally get this policy statement on the street. It strikes us as a solid document that will add an element of coordinated focus to Canadian foreign policy and should help Ottawa to play a more active role in the world. There are a number of opportunities in the statement for enhanced engagement with the U.S., not only on global issues but in trade and hemispheric issues as well. The Opposition will probably not gain any points in their criticism of the statement, most of which would likely survive a change of government in any event.

Visit Canada's Classified Web Site at  
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/wha/ottawa>

DICKSON